

Message Text

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ACTION SCA-01

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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2329

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

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DEPT FOR SCA FROM LAWRENCE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIS LE

SUBJECT: TELECON LAWRENCE/WALENTYNOWICZ RE LEBANESE
VISA APPLICANTS

1. SUMMARY: PARTICIPATING CONOFFS TUNIS CONFERENCE
QUERIED RE LEBANESE VISA TRAFFIC THEIR POSTS. THEY
REPORT SOME GENERAL INCREASE LEBANESE NIV AND IV DEMAND DURING PAST
6-8 MONTHS AT MOST POSTS. MOST INCREASE IN DEMAND IN
NIV'S. MOST NOV DEMAND IS IN "F" CLASSIFICATION. THIS
IS LARGELY ATTRIBUTED TO FACT OF LONGSTANDING BEIRUT
POSITION OF GREAT CARE IN EXAMINING ALL LEBANESE NIV
APPLICANTS; A DECREASE IN ACTUAL STUDENT SPACES IN
LEBANON RESULTING FROM THE CIVIL DISTURBANCES; AND
OPPORTUNISTIC APPLICANTS UTILIZING THE DISTURBANCE AS
A RATIONALE TO APPEAR AS STUDENTS AS A DEVICE TO DEPART
COUNTRY OR AREA.

2. DETAILS:

AMMAN - PAST 6-8 MO. LEBANESE NIV DEMAND UP 20
PER CENT; IV DEMAND UP 15-18 PER CENT

DAMASCUS - PAST 6-8 MO. LEBANESE NIV DEMAND UP 35 PER
CENT; IV DEMAND UP 10 PER CENT.

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CAIRO - PAST 4 MO. NIV AND IV LEBANESE DEMAND

VERY SMALL AND SLOW INCREASE.

DHAHRAN, JIDDA, KUWAIT, TRIPOLI - PAST 618 MO.
10-30 PER CENT INCREASE LEBANESE NIV DEMAND, LARGELY
"F" CLASSIFICATION DURING NORMAL STUDENT RUSH PERIODS.
NO APPRECIABLE IV DEMAND INCREASE.

CASABLANCA, BAGHDAD AND TUNIS - NO APPRECIABLE
LEBANESE NIV-IV DEMAND INCREASE.

3. ALL INCREASE ESTIMATES ARE OF LEBANESE DEMAND AT
THAT POST. DUE TO OVERALL SMALLNESS OF OPERATION AT
MANY NAMES POSTS, PERCENTAGE ESTIMATES REPRESENT EX-
TREMELY SMALL NUMBER OF APPLICANTS. ALL ESTIMATES
PROVIDED BY CONOFF WITHOUT BENEFIT OF ACTUAL DATA
AVAILABLE AT CONFERENCE.

4. NONE OF CONOFFS AT TUNIS CONFERENCE HAVE PERCEIVED
SO-CALLED LEBANESE REFUGEE CASES APPEARING IN THEIR
AREAS IN ANY SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS. HOWEVER, CONOFF
FROM BEIRUT OPINES THAT GIVEN HISTORY OF LEBANON BEING
A NATION OF EMIGRATION, GIVEN CURRENT SITUATION IN
LEBANON, MAY US DEVELOPMENT RESULTING IN GENERALIZED
PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF A LEBANESE REFUGEE PROGRAM,
ACTUAL OR PLANNED, COULD RESULT IN TENS OF THOUSANDS
OF "REFUGEE" APPLICANTS EMERGING IN LEBANON AND AREA
GENERALLY.

5. WITHIN LAST MONTH BOTH CANADIAN AND AUSTRALIAN
EMBASSIES, BEIRUT SUDDENLY EXPERIENCED OVERWHELMING
CROWDS SEEKING DEPARTURE TO THOSE COUNTRIES. BOTH
EXPERIENCES BASED ON RUMOR AND/OR MISUNDERSTOOD PRESS
STATEMENT OF SOME RELAXED VISA PROGRAM TO ASSIST LEBANESE. NO ACTUAL
LARGE PROGRAM IS KNOWN TO EXIST
IN EITHER CANADA OR AUSTRALIA AT THIS TIME.
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